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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/002,743

11/02/2001

Toshio Ueno

01702/LH

3841

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08/10/2006

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EXAMINER

JEANTY, ROMAIN

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3623

DATE MAILED: 08/10/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/002,743

Applicant(s)

UENO, TOSHIO

Examiner

Romain Jeanty

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 18 April 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. This Final Office Action is in response to the communication received April 18, 2006. Claims are pending in the application.

Response to Arguments

2. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-2 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 1-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Stier et al "Stier" (U.S. Patent No. 6,591,258) in view of Butler (US 2003/0028474).

As per claims 1 and 9, Stier discloses a method of incorporating knowledge into knowledge base system. In so doing, Stier discloses a service information portal section which provides web pages as an information input and output interface (col. 6, lines 20-22, lines 62-65, and col. 12, lines 61-64; Fig. 1a, 1c and 6-12); a knowledge base section which stores various claim reports and solutions answered by engineers with respect to the claim reports (col. 11, lines 15-21, lines 40-63, and col. 23, lines 47-52), and a claim handling section which registers in said knowledge base section a new claim report in which at least a claim title is structured as a combination of predetermined items of

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definition information on the basis of a claim content input to a client web page, and manages the registered new claim report as an unsolved claim requiring an answer from the engineer (col. , lines 11, lines 29-39); wherein the claim handling section is configured to determine an engineer who is to take charge of a supporting task for preparing a solution to the new claim report, based on ranks of importance of supporting tasks already assigned to engineers of a division-in-charge, and progress states of the supporting tasks (col. 52, line 35 through col. 53 line 18).

Applicant has amended the claim to recite the features of...interfaces...and which are provided by at least one engineer.. from among a plurality of engineers of a division-in-charge of preparing the solution to the new claim report. Stier does not explicitly disclose such added features. Butler in the same field of endeavor, discloses the concept of more than one more representatives/engineers to solve claim reports (Paragraphs [0218, 0219]. It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to modify the disclosures of Stier to incorporate the teachings of Butler. A person of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to use such a combination in order to mediate disputes such as lawsuits between users.

As per claim 2, Stier further discloses the technical support system according to claim 1, wherein said claim handling section includes a supporting task table which holds records of the engineers each obtained as numeric value data by combining the ranks of importance of supporting tasks assigned before registration of the new claim report and the progress states of the supporting tasks with a predetermined weighting, and a selecting section which selects the engineer who is to take charge of the supporting task for preparing the solution for the new claim report by comparing the numeric value data

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of the records held in said supporting task table (col. 9, lines 49-51; col. 49, lines 31-49; and col. 50, lines 44-67).

As per claim 3, Stier further discloses the technical support system according to claim 2, wherein said claim handling section further includes an engineer information table which holds records of the engineers including at least one item selected from a schedule after the registration of the new claim report, a product designed as experience, the number of years of experience, the number of supporting tasks, a responsible unit, and a technical field, and said selecting section is configured to switch said supporting task table to said engineer information table upon increase in the number of newly-registered claim reports, and to select the engineer with reference to a content of said engineer information table (col. 9, lines 49-51; col. 49, lines 31-49; and col. 50, lines 44-67).

As per claim 4, Stier further discloses the technical support system according to claim 1, wherein said claim handling section further includes an assignment update section which selects the next prospective engineer when assignment of the supporting task is not accepted by the previously selected engineer (col. 6, lines 9-25).

As per claim 5, Claim 5 recites a technical support system using a knowledge base section which stores various claim reports and related solutions for performing the steps of system claim 1; therefore claim 5 is rejected under the same rationale relied upon of claim 1.

As per claim 6, Stier further the technical support method according to claim 5, wherein said engineer determining step is configured to use a supporting task table which holds records of the engineers each obtained as numeric value data by combining the

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ranks of importance of supporting tasks assigned before registration of the new claim report and the progress states of the supporting tasks with a predetermined weighting, and to make selection of the engineers by comparing the numeric value data of the records held in said supporting task table (col. 9, lines 49-51; col. 49, lines 31-49; and col. 50, lines 44-67).

As per claim 7, Stier further discloses the technical support method according to claim 6, wherein upon an increase in a number of newly-registered claim reports, said engineer is determined by consulting, instead of said supporting task table, an engineer information table which holds records of the engineers including at least one of schedule after the registration of the new claim report, a product designed as experience, the number of years of experience, the number of supporting tasks, a responsible unit, and a technical field, and selecting the engineer with reference to a content of said engineer information table (col. 9, lines 49-51; col. 49, lines 31-49; and col. 50, lines 44-67).

As per claim 8, Stier further discloses the technical support method according to claim 5, further comprising selecting a next prospective engineer when assignment of the supporting task is not accepted by the previously selected engineer (col. 6, lines 9-25).

As per claim 10, Stier further discloses the recording medium according to claim 9, wherein said claim handling determined the engineer by consulting a supporting task table which holds records of the engineers, and each of the records is obtained as numeric value data by combining, with a predetermined weighting, the rank of importance of a supporting task assigned by the engineer before registration of the new claim report and the progress state of the supporting task and selecting the engineer who is to take charge of the supporting task for preparing the solution for the new claim report by comparing

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the numeric value data of the records held in said supporting task table (col. 9, lines 49-51; col. 49, lines 31-49; and col. 50, lines 44-67).

As per claim 11, Stier the recording medium according to claim 10, wherein upon an increase in a number of newly-registered claim reports, said claim handling determined the engineer by consulting, instead of said supporting task table, said program is configured such that said claim handling section performs a process of using an engineer information table which holds records of the engineers including at least one of from a schedule after the registration of the new claim report, a product designed as experience, a number of years of experience, a number of supporting tasks, a responsible unit, and a technical field, and selecting the engineers with reference to a content of said engineer information table (col. 9, lines 49-51 col. 49, lines 31-49; and col. 50, lines 44-67).

As per claim 12, Stier further discloses the recording medium according to claim 9, wherein said claim handling section selects a next prospective engineer when assignment of the supporting task is not accepted by a previously selected engineer (col. 6, lines 9-25).

Response to Arguments

5. Applicant has amended the claims and argued that Stier et al does not teach or suggest determining an engineer charge a supporting task for preparing a solution to a new claim report from among a plurality of engineers of a division-in-charge of preparing the solution to the new claim, and applicant further argued that that Stier also does not, teach or suggest a claim handling section that determines the engineer to take charge of

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the supporting task based on ranks of importance of supporting tasks already assigned to the engineers of the division-in-charge, and based on progress states of the supporting tasks. In response, the examiner respectfully disagrees, and applicant is directed to the new rejection in paragraph 4 above.

Conclusion

6. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.

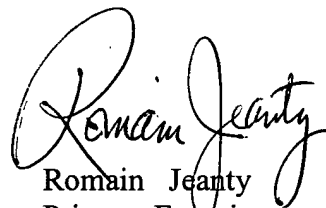
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Romain Jeanty whose telephone number is (571) 272-6732. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Thurs 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m..

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tariq R. Hafiz can be reached on (571) 272-6729. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

July 10, 2006



Romain Jeanty
Primary Examiner
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